

Pasadena

COMMUNITY

Pasadena Nisei Veterans Look Back

With its theme "Salute 2001 Veterans," August's 61st Annual Nisei Week Festival paid tribute to the Nikkei Veterans. Keeping this in mind, a look back into Pasadena's past, or more specifically, the scrapbook of Shig Takayama, gives us a peek at some Pasadena Nisei who served during World War II.

Shig is quick to point out that not all WWII Nisei veterans served in the 442nd RCT or the 100th Infantry Battalion. For instance, he tells the story of Clyde Asakura, who, wanting to maximize his army pay, volunteered to serve as a paratrooper in the Pacific Theatre, thereby allowing him to send more money home to his family. On Asakura's first jump, none of the officers of his company survived. The Hawaii-born Pasadena resident took over command of his unit and led his company to safety. Word of his exploits reached General Douglas MacArthur, who was so impressed that he summoned Asakura to meet him in Australia and the two ended up becoming good friends.

Takayama served in the 31st Engineer Combat Battalion. He jokingly says that instead of a tour of duty, he actually got a tour of Europe, as he was able to see England, France, Germany and Switzerland during his army time. All kidding aside, his battalion luckily escaped death twice, as fate prevented them from occupying buildings (which were to be used as headquarters) that were destroyed by bombs just hours after being passed over.



Brookside Golf Course serves as the backdrop for returning Pasadena Nisei vets (l to r) James Mitsumori, Shig Takayama and Takao Noguchi in February, 1946. Mitsumori and Noguchi were members of the 442 RCT.

Merrily They Roll Along

Who says Thursday nights are for "must see tv?" A loyal group of individuals who meet faithfully every Thursday would probably never recognize the celebrities from the ensemble casts of "Cheers," "Friends" or "ER." Rather than gather at a bar with Norm and Cliff, they hang out at the bowling alley, where indeed, everybody does know their name! These are the members of the Pasadena Nisei Mixed Bowling League, which is now starting its second half century of existence.

Back in 1950 at the Pasadena Bowling Center, the *Aris Ayes*, a men's club comprised of young Pasadena Nisei, started a bowling league that took the name of their club. Headed by President Nob Yamane and Secretary-Treasurer Terry Hino, they bowled once a week on Sunday nights until 1952 when they moved to Thursdays.

At the time, bowling proved to be a popular social event, as many families were just beginning to resettle in Pasadena following the end of WWII. The Pasadena Bowling Center, on Colorado Blvd near Orange Grove, was located near the Kensington Hotel (actually the First Presbyterian Church of Pasadena, which housed Japanese families until they could find places to live), making it convenient for the young Nisei to gather there. In the early years, teams had names like Backlashers, T&T Service, Al-E-Kats, Michis and Loggers. Noteworthy on the roster of the Loggers was the name of Robert "Lefty" Kikkawa, who is the only original league member still bowling today.

In 1960, the league changed its name to Pasadena Nisei Mixed and in 1961 the league moved to Eagle Rock Lanes, a bowling alley located on the corner of Colorado and Figueroa, just outside the Pasadena city limits. The league was really flourishing, with 34 five person teams. In 1987, Eagle Rock Lanes was converted into a post office, so the league moved to Little Tokyo Bowl, where 38 teams of 4-sones still competed. When those lanes closed in 1992, the league had to

search for a new home, finding a place at the Beverly Bowling Center. The league still meets there once a week and it is now composed of 22 teams of 4-sones.

As mentioned before, Robert Kikkawa remains as the only original league member still bowling. And the old adage of practice makes perfect certainly applies to him, as his average has improved from 135 in 1952, to a robust 179 in 2001! And he has a career high 277 game to his credit. Bill Shinmoto (1955) and Yuk Hino (1956) join Kikkawa as the only three bowlers who have continuously bowled in this league since the 1950's. Shinmoto (151 avg/229 high game for the 2001 season) and Hino (164 avg/235 high game) show they can still bowl with the best of them.

The league has also produced phenomenal performances over the years. Bill Woo has two 300 games to his credit, while Charlie Ivey and Ruben Aguilar have also rolled perfect games. Veronica Moreno has the ladies record for high game with a 289.

Toru Takahashi was the first to bowl a 700 series and Dean Fujikawa was the second. The league record for scratch series is 787 by Glen Richards, while Jay Culver has cracked the 700 barrier 13 times! Loreen Yasui holds

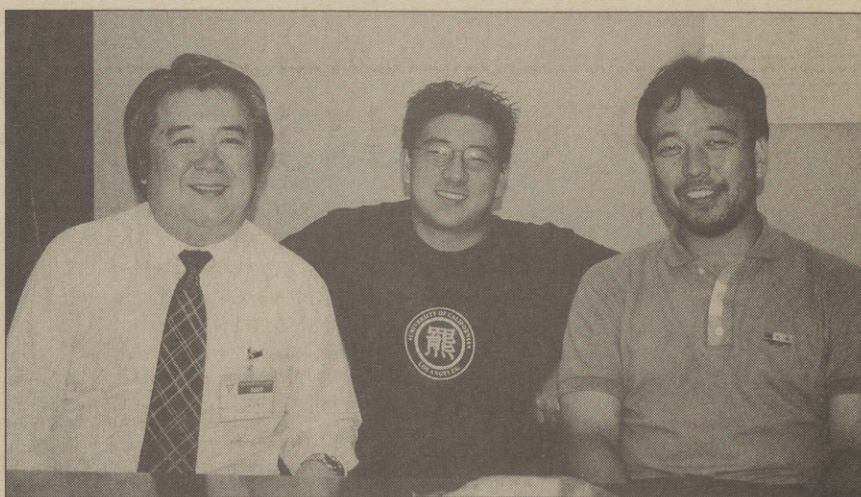
the women's scratch series record with a 681.

The elections for new league officers were held in early August. Jay Culver (President), Kimi Kuwae (Vice President), Yuk Hino (Secretary/Treasurer—a post he has held continuously since 1956), Craig Ishii (Men's League Rep) and Alice Shiozawa (Women's League Rep) form this year's cabinet.

Pasadena Nisei Mixed Honor Roll
Men's High Game
 (1951-2001)
 300 Bill Woo (twice), Charlie Ivey, Ruben Aguilar
 299 Glen Richards, Richard Yanagita, Ron Woo
 298 Kevin Wong
 297 Norman Kiyomura, Ron La Hai, Brian Li
Women's High Game
 (1951-2001)
 289 Veronica Moreno
 280 Hana Matsumoto
 278 Stacey Fujii
 269 Myrna Cruz
Men's High Series
 (1953-2001)
 787 Glen Richards
 785 Richard Yanagita
 778 Richard Yanagita
 775 Kurt Arakaki
 756 Ryan Okamoto
Women's High Series
 (1953-2001)
 681 Loreen Yasui
 674 Linda Uyeki, Kimi Kuwae
 670 Elaine Morita
 666 Stacey Fujii, Linda Uyeki
Special thanks to Yuk Hino for providing information and statistics.



Pasadena Nisei Mixed veterans Yuk Hino, Robert Kikkawa and Bill Shinmoto



Tom Nakanishi seated between Tatsushi Sunoue, left, and Kenzo Sekiguchi, principal leaders of the International Youth Peace Seminar in Hiroshima.

Scholarship Presented to Tom Nakanishi

Thomas Masao Hirano Nakanishi, a 2001 graduate from Pasadena Polytechnic High School, was recently honored as a recipient of a Japanese American Treaty Centennial Scholarship. This award was especially meaningful to him as it was an acknowledgement from the Japanese American community that it supports his plans to further his education to help him his career goals.

Nakanishi has also just graduated from a Japanese language senior high school at Kochugakubu. It is this accomplishment of which his parents, Don and Marsha Nakanishi, take great pride in. Don, who is a professor and the director of the UCLA Asian American Studies Center, hopes that his son can be an example for other Yonsei who come from families in which Japanese is not normally spoken, and inspire them to pursue their Japanese language studies as far as they can.

The family is extremely grateful to Pasadena Gakuen (where Tom gradu-

ated six years ago) for providing him with a solid foundation in the Japanese language.

As a youth, Tom played basketball for the Pasadena Bruins and Wintersburg, and was a member of the Yonsei Basketball Team that went to Japan. He played varsity basketball at Poly, and annually performed in the school musicals. The honor student also sang for many years with the renowned Los Angeles Children's Chorus and attended church at Nishi Hongwanji Temple. In his spare time, he served as a volunteer for Asians for Miracle Marrow Matches (A3M). He has spent one summer in France as part of an American Field Service Experience and another summer in Hiroshima working at the YMCA's 23rd International Youth Peace Seminar.

Nakanishi is bound for Yale University in the fall, where he plans to continue studying Japanese. He hopes to one day be the U.S. Ambassador to Japan.

Pasadena Gakuen Honors Graduates

Pasadena Gakuen proudly presented its 2001 graduating class in dual ceremonies held at the Pasadena Japanese Cultural Institute and later that same day, at the Zenshiji Soto Mission Hall. Graduating from sixth grade were Akemi Imai, Julie Lanselle, Naoko Takeda and Mika Terajima. Ninth grade graduates included Hanami Sutton, Mika Taihei and Jeremy Wang.

The ceremony at Zenshiji included graduates from all of the other schools in the Kyodo Gakuen System. Many of the Pasadena students, teachers and parents received awards there. Following a graduation speech by Mika Terajima, Julie Lanselle received a



Pasadena Gakuen 6th grade graduates pictured along side Principal Masami Tanaka; (l to r) Mika Terajima, Naoko Takeda, Akemi Imai, Julie Lanselle.



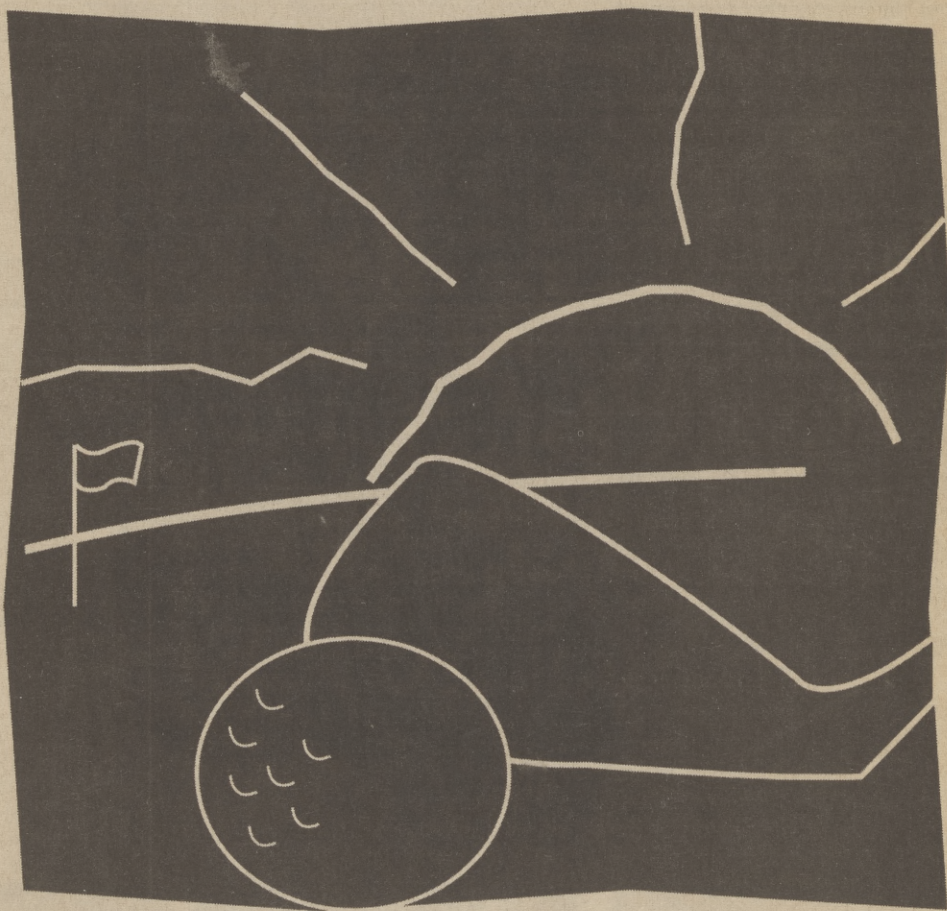
9th grade graduating class: (l to r) Sue Kawashima (9th grade teacher), Jeremy Wang, Hanami Sutton, Mika Taihei, Principal Masami Tanaka

scholarship plaque award as an elementary honor student. Lanselle was the only student from Kyodo System to receive this honor. Mika Komine, President of the Mothers' Association, received a merit award and Naoko Shadd, a Pasadena Gakuen *sensei*, received a five year service award.

Enrollment is now open to anyone, 5 and 16 interested in learning Japanese. There are now separate classes for students who come from English or Japanese speaking families, making it easier to learn Japanese even if it is not spoken at home.

For information, please call Masami Tanaka at (818) 379-9852 or Max Zirkelbach at (818) 249-0018.

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1st Altadena Presbyterian to Hold Fall Festival

The 2001 Annual Fall Festival of the First Presbyterian Church of Altadena will be held on Saturday, September 15 from 2 p.m. to 8 p.m. The church was established in 1913 to minister to young Japanese immigrants and is still ministering to the community.

The Festival will offer a variety of foods, including chirashi, chow mein, barbecued chicken, hot dogs, sno-cones and corn on the cob.

The Women's Organization will again operate its popular boutique and bakery shops, featuring crafts, white elephant items, artificial flowers, gift items, new chinaware and a variety of baked goods, all at reasonable prices.

Game booths will be available and the always popular cascarones will be sold, providing wholesome fun for the youngsters. To make this year's Fall Festival more child friendly, new exciting crafts and games designed especially for young children have been planned by Paul Kikuchi and Ron Ota, with the help of their friends and young church members.

For the eighth consecutive year, a craft, art, collectibles and hobby show will be held. This free exhibit provides a showcase for talent of church members and friends in the community.

First Presbyterian Church is located at 2775 Lincoln Ave., Altadena, one mile north of the Lincoln Avenue offramp of the 210 Freeway. For more information, call (626) 791-4271.

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